

# WILMINGTON DISTRICT NEWS ONLINE

MAY 2007

## IT'S HURRICANE SEASON 2007

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The Atlantic Hurricane Season runs from 1 June through 30 November annually. Due to the rapid dissipation of El Nino which has occurred over the past couple of months, the Department of Atmospheric Science forecasters at Colorado State University are predicting an above-normal Atlantic Hurricane Season this year. The outlook is for 17 named storms, with 9 of them becoming hurricanes. Of those 9, predictions are that 5 of them will be intense (category 3, 4, or 5). The Atlantic basin activity is expected to be about 185 percent of the long-term average. Bottom line...we need to be prepared!

For the veteran North Carolinians that still remember the wrath of Hurricanes HUGO, FRAN, FLOYD, and ISABEL, the 2006 hurricane season was considered a non-event. Tropical Storm ERNESTO barely made us blink and was gone before any Labor Day plans could be adversely affected. **Don't be lulled into a false sense of security.**

The District Circular 500-1-3, Hurricane Preparedness, was provided electronically to all SAW employees earlier this

year. It can be found at :

<\\saw-fs1wil\common\District Share\District Circular\2007 Hurricane Preparedness 500-1-3.pdf>

This Circular provides information for protective measures for the workplace, as well as your home. It includes updated information, websites, and phone numbers to help you prepare yourself and your family for extreme weather conditions. Please take the time to review it and ensure that you are prepared in the event we become storm victims this year. *We cannot prevent the storms, but we can take action to protect our property and keep ourselves and loved ones safe.*

Some helpful websites are:

[www.ncfloodmaps.com](http://www.ncfloodmaps.com). Areas that are especially vulnerable to hurricanes and people within them may be ordered to evacuate because of storm surge hazard. Even if you don't live in these areas, you may be vulnerable to flooding and high winds.

[www.ncdoi.com](http://www.ncdoi.com). This is the Department of Insurance website for additional tips for hurricane and storm preparation.

[www.fema.gov/areyouready](http://www.fema.gov/areyouready).

This is FEMA's website for storm preparations.

The most active season for the Atlantic coast is generally in September. Hurricane Fran made landfall on 5 September 1996; Hurricane Dennis brushed the coast on 5 September 1999, followed by Hurricane Floyd on 16 September 1999; with Hurricane Isabel striking the coast on 18 September 2003; and Hurricane Ophelia on 14 September 2005. Be aware that your beach vacation may be interrupted during this time of the season!

Our Commodities Planning and Response Team members and our Recovery Field Office team members are ready to continue the District's impressive record of hurricane response efforts; both here in NC and across the nation. While we all hope the season will be uneventful...we *plan for the worst and hope for the best.*

Hope you have a great summer and safe Hurricane Season!

**Your EM Team,**

**Ron Stirrat, Diane Lastinger, and Stephan Vithalani**

## UP FRONT

## HURRICANE SEASON '07: ARE YOU PREPARED?

Now that hurricane season has begun, how well do you think you are prepared?

Despite recent record-breaking hurricane seasons, reports indicate that one-third of residents in hurricane-vulnerable states may not be properly insured. And, with the Atlantic hurricane season that lasts from now until November 30th - residents from Texas to Florida to Maine could potentially be hit by a storm.

To best safeguard yourself, your family and your possessions during a hurricane, review the following checklist to see how well you're prepared, and keep some things in mind if you do not evacuate. It is never too late to prepare before we get into the heart of hurricane season August



LTC Patrick Tilque,  
Dep. Dist. Commander

to the end of September.

-- Review your homeowner's policy with your insurance agent to determine whether you have adequate protection. In particular, determine whether you have flood insurance and if your policy will cover current rebuilding costs.

-- Understand your responsibilities, which may include ensuring that sump pumps are functioning and installing shutters.

-- If you live on or near the coast, consider making improvements to protect your home, including storm shutters for windows and sliding doors, and a hurricane-resistant roof.

-- Take a home inventory. Be as detailed as possible, listing all personal items and including photos and videos where possible. Keep your inventory in a fire/water proof safe or a safe deposit box. A free online home inventory tool from the Insurance Information Institute is available at <http://www.hanover.com>.

-- Stock emergency supplies, including a battery-powered radio, flashlights, extra batteries, first aid handbook and kit, a week's worth of non-perishable food and water, tools, blankets and/or sleeping bags, cooking and eating utensils, paper plates and cups, boards, plastic sheeting, tape and toiletries (toilet paper, soap, bleach (for disinfecting), diapers, etc).

-- Develop an evacuation plan and notify family and friends where you will be staying if forced to evacuate.

If you learned something new about preparing yourself for a hurricane that's great. If you did not it might make you think of how well you *are* prepared to take of yourself, your family and property(s). If a hurricane does arrive in the Wilmington area I know this mid-westerner will take it seriously. It's always better safe than sorry. ■

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**U.S. Army Corps of Engineers**  
**Wilmington District**





## AFGHANISTAN DAM IS HIGH PROFILE, HIGH PRIORITY



Kajakai Dam is a high security risk and is guarded around the clock by multi-national forces. (Hazelton Photo)

The Kajakai Dam was built by the U.S. in 1953, one of dozens of projects being built around the world to bring infrastructure to under-developed countries. Massive turbines in the dam played an important role in bringing electricity to the

southwestern part of the country. They were designed for major maintenance overhauls every 10 years, but civil war, the Soviet occupation and the Taliban have thwarted those efforts. Only a single overhaul project was successful when the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) completed one in the early 1970s.

Since 2004, the Wilmington District's John Hazelton has been a key player in the rebuilding of Kajakai Dam. With two previous deployments to Afghanistan he knows the importance of getting this high profile dam back in business. Currently it generates 20 megawatts of power and provides electricity to about 380,000 people. Once it's fully operational, the dam could provide electricity to more than a million Afghans, double the amount of arable land in the south, and spur economic development. And by providing irrigation for wheat or other valuable agricultural crops it's also hoped that this will lessen the amount of opium that's grown in the area that is used in the drug trade.

"Rebuilding the dam is a huge issue," Hazelton said. "It's an arid country, and with 25 years of war the infrastructure was beaten up pretty bad. We're working with the Afghan

engineers to develop more efficient methods of managing limited water from the Kajakai reservoir. We hope to determine the yearly snow melt volumes and balance that between irrigation, power production and other demands and flood control."

Hazelton said by using computer models the Afghan people are catching up with modern methods of better and more efficient ways of water management. He said what's making the process go smoothly and quickly is the Afghan's willingness to learn and their positive attitude.

"Oh yeah! I am so impressed with the Afghan people. They're so eager to learn. There was a lot of skepticism about us going in and teaching them methods some said were too advanced. But we've had workshops and they'd stay after class and they'd come back the next day after having worked with the models at home. It's very rewarding work, and there is so much more to do. I would highly recommend anyone to go over and work with the Afghan people."



John Hazelton, left, checks out a carpet in a Kabul store- "I am so impressed with the Afghan people. They're so eager to learn."



## U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS WELCOMES LTG VAN ANTWERP, 52ND CHIEF OF ENGINEERS, BIDS FAREWELL TO LTG CARL STROCK



Army Chief of Staff general George Casey, right, swears in the 52nd Chief of Engineers and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Commander LTG Robert L. Van Antwerp as his wife Paula assists. (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers photos by F.T. Eyre.)

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers welcomes Lieutenant General Robert L. Van Antwerp, the 52<sup>nd</sup> Chief of Engineers and Commander of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. He assumed this position from Lieutenant General Carl A. Strock who retired last month after 36 years of military service.

LTG Van Antwerp's previous assignment was as Commanding General, U.S. Army Accessions Command and Deputy Commanding General for Initial Military Training at Fort Monroe, Virginia. The Army Accessions Command con-

sists of U.S. Army Recruiting Command, Fort Knox, Kentucky; U.S. Army Cadet Command, Fort Monroe, Virginia; and the U.S. Army Training Center, Fort Jackson, South Carolina. Additionally, General Van Antwerp exercised Department of the Army directed executive agent authority over the Military Entrance Processing Command.

Command assignments include the U.S. Army Maneuver Support Center and Fort Leonard Wood/Commandant, U.S. Army Engineer School; U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Los Angeles District during the Northridge Earthquake of 1994; the U.S. Army Division, South Atlantic, Atlanta, Georgia; and the 326<sup>th</sup> Engineer Battalion, 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division (Air Assault) during Operations Desert Shield and Desert

Storm in Saudi Arabia and Iraq.

Other assignments include Chief of Staff, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; Assistant Chief of Staff for Installation Management, Washington, DC; Director, Office of Competitive Sourcing, Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Research, Development and Acquisition), Washington, DC; Executive Assistant to the Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Washington, DC; Executive Office, Office of the Chief of Engineers, Washington, DC; Chief, Military Engineering and Construction Division, U.S. Army Western Command, Fort Shafter, Hawaii; Execu-



LTG Van Antwerp receives the colors from USACE Command Sergeant Major Robert Winzenreid.



## VAN ANTWERP CON'T

tive Officer, 84<sup>th</sup> Engineer Battalion, 45<sup>th</sup> General Support Group, Schofield Barracks, Hawaii; and Instructor, Department of Mechanics, West Point, New York.

Lieutenant General Robert L. Van Antwerp graduated from the U.S. Military Academy in 1972. He

completed Ranger, Airborne and Air Assault training, the Engineer Officer Basic Course and the Engineer Officer Advanced Course. He holds a Master of Science Degree in Mechanical Engineering from the University of Michigan and a Master of Business Administration De-

gree from Long Island University in New York. He is a Registered Professional Engineer.

LTG Van Antwerp and his wife, Paula have three sons, Jeff, Luke and Rob; and two daughters, Julia and Kathryn. ■



LTG Carl Strock reviews members of the Fife and Drum Corps during his retirement ceremony at Fort Myer, Virginia. Below left LTG Strock gives his farewell speech, and at right members of the 3rd United States Infantry (The Old Guard) fire their cannons. (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Photos by F.T. Eyre)



## ASIAN PACIFIC HERITAGE MONTH FEATURE

# AMERICAN MILITARY MEMBERS FIND MEANING OF KARATE WHILE STATIONED ON OKINAWA



Marine Corps Colonel Medio Monti receives a hard punch to his abdomen. Called a sanchin check it measures physical and mental strength and focus. It's part of karate training in the UechiRyu style.

Okinawa, Japan has been home to U.S. military and civilian members and their families for more than six decades. Its warm, clear blue waters lure scores of American scuba divers for off duty activity, and the island offers natural beauty for other recreational activities like hiking or boating. On-base tour groups offer trips to see Okinawa's rich, unique culture. Indigenous to the culture is karate, the self-defense art form that some Americans take advantage of while stationed on the island.

Gordi Breyette is one of those Americans who saw the opportu-

nity to train and learn karate right from the source. Retired from the Air Force as a weatherman, he now calls the island prefecture home. He spent much of his military career at Kadena Air Base located in central Okinawa. He had some karate training in Plattsburgh, New York during the early stages of his military career, and he was fortunate enough to have been assigned to Okinawa where he had access to and trained with some of the best karate teachers in the world.

Fast forward to 2007. *Sensei* (Japanese for teacher) Gordi "Seizan" Breyette has achieved the rank of Hachidan or eighth degree black belt in the UechiRyu (way-chee, dee-you) system, a form of Chinese tiger-style boxing that was brought to Okinawa by Kanbun Uechi about 100 years ago. Breyette is the highest-ranked foreigner

in UechiRyu living in Japan, the only foreigner to own a UechiRyu dojo (training school) off the military bases, and he is the only foreign practitioner of the UechiRyu system in Japan who teaches karate to *Japanese people*.



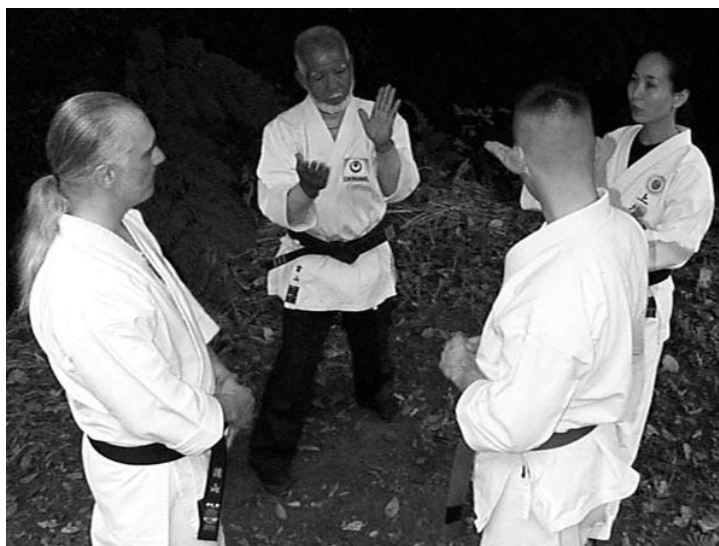
Kane Uechi, son of Kanbun Uechi, helped modernize the UechiRyu system. Various karate styles were exported to the U.S. with help from American GIs after WWII.

The roots of American involvement with karate came after World War Two when the American mili-

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## KARATE CON'T



Gordi Breyette, left, his wife Sumako and COL Medio Monti, right foreground, listen to Toyama Seiko Sensei discuss karate techniques.

tary occupied Japan. American servicemen stationed on Okinawa began learning karate from masters who taught in order to survive the post-war economy. However, while the foreign students learned how to punch, block, kick and chop, only a handful learned the true meaning of the formal rules and customs of an Okinawan dojo, and discovered how this leads to self-improvement.

“Most new foreigners lacked basic Japanese language, cultural etiquette, and understanding of junior-senior relationships,” Breyette said. “They weren’t trained from childhood to bow or kneel properly. They didn’t know the difference between a Sensei and a senior student wearing a black belt, and they

didn’t know how to enter a dojo, or how to properly approach a teacher or high-ranked senior.”

In many ways, he explained, Okinawans viewed foreigners as physically-mature, but untrained children. They had to be

taught dojo culture from scratch. Despite their attempts to understand, and their cooperation and determination to learn, some Okinawan seniors found it difficult to teach foreign students basic social manners and customs along with the slow, detailed basics of Okinawan karate. In some instances, they cut corners and modified some aspects of training to keep foreign students in the group and satisfied with the physical workouts.

“Many of these Americans were not soft civilians, or unused to physical work. They were good-natured, hard-working, and friendly,” Breyette said. “Nevertheless they came ready to learn how to fight.”

According to Breyette, body conditioning and the “hard knocks” training style fit the Americans admirably. However, the typical one to three-year military tour on Okinawa was a very short time to absorb the basics of training that used to take several years to master. While teachers made adjustments for their eagerness to learn everything quickly before leaving Okinawa, a long-established karate system was not something to be easily compromised or watered down.

“These soldiers, some of whom had seen combat and fought in the trenches, didn’t want to take what they saw as dancing lessons. So in some systems, the administration and teaching curriculum were reconstructed to facilitate well-defined, rapid, and progressive training for foreigners.”

Breyette said a major change occurred when authority was delegated to foreign students to share their training with others in their home countries.

“In other words, foreign branch dojo operated by relatively low-ranking students were authorized. This made continued training and growth in the system particularly

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## TROUT: CANARIES IN AN UNDERWATER COAL MINE

### Article & Photos by Amanda Jones, Asheville Regulatory Field Office

Don't be surprised if you see a sign on the door of the Asheville Regulatory Field Office that reads "Gone Fishin'."

Members of the Asheville Regulatory Field Office occasionally get to fish with biologists from one of their state partners, the North Carolina Wildlife Resource Commission (NCWRC). Unfortunately we don't get to keep what we catch, but we do get to learn more about a resource that we work closely with NCWRC to protect; rainbow, brown, and brook trout. Under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, the discharge of fill material into waters of the U.S. requires a Department of the Army permit issued through the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Regulatory Division. Through the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act, the Asheville Regulatory Field Office consults with NCWRC to determine if permit requests will affect any trout resources within and near the project boundaries. Currently, the Wilmington District has four regulatory field offices, in which the Raleigh and Asheville Field Offices review permit requests that consider impacts to trout resources in the area. When a permit application is received, the

NCWRC also receives a copy of the permit application so it can provide comments regarding the location, type, and health of trout in the project area. Routinely,

NCWRC staff will visit the project site and survey stream channels that are proposed for impact. On this rare occasion, the Asheville Regulatory Field Office tagged along to learn more about western North Carolina's trout resources. In this case, NCWRC uses a shocking device that temporarily stuns fish with a low voltage electric shock. As the fish float to the surface, they are captured, identified and then released. If trout are located in the vicinity of the project, NCWRC may recommend that the applicant take further measures to avoid and minimize impacts to the stream channels. This includes limiting construction to certain times of the year, construction techniques that would encourage fish migration, and installing more stringent sediment



David Baker and Liz Hair of the Asheville Regulatory Field Office check the health of this trout, an indicator species that prefers clean water.

and erosion control measures. These recommendations are then incorporated as special conditions of the permit authorization.

So why all the fuss for a critter that may ultimately end up in a frying pan?

Well, like most aquatic species, trout are excellent indicators of the overall health of the aquatic ecosystem because they are intolerant of poor water quality. Currently, North Carolina hosts three types of trout in approximately 4,000 miles of stream channels within 32 counties. Brook trout are the only native trout to North Carolina and the eastern United States. Both brown and rain-

con't on page 9



## TROUT CON'T

bow trout were introduced to North Carolina in the 1800's which has added to the decline of the brook trout. The range of brook trout in western North Carolina has declined by over 80% due in large part to habitat loss and competition from non-native fish species. Land use changes associated with logging, agriculture, and residential/commercial development has contributed to the brook trout's decline because of sediment deposition in North Carolina waters which is currently the



This trout lives in one stretch of approximately 4000 miles of stream channels in North Carolina.

primary threat to the health of our state waters. Rainbow and brown trout now make up the majority of wild trout populations in North Carolina since they can tolerate warmer water temperatures and more degraded water quality than the brook trout. There are approximately 500 isolated populations of brook trout that remain in headwater stream channels of western North Carolina.

The fact that these trout may ultimately end up as your dinner is an-

other reason to protect and improve their populations. The economic benefits of trout fishing are a critical resource to western North Carolina. In a recent 2001 survey by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, trout fishing provided recreation for 173,000 anglers.

Approximately 41% of these anglers were out-of-state residents. A recent survey by the NCWRC still being finalized, estimates that anglers spend approximately \$95 million per year trout fishing in western North Carolina. Since trout fishing is big business here in western North Carolina, the NCWRC takes an active role in maintaining and improving these economic benefits by stocking stream channels with trout. NCWRC currently stocks 750,000 trout annually in over 4,000 miles of streams in western North Carolina to provide opportunities for trout anglers. Brook, brown and rainbow trout are stocked at approximately 10" long and are typically caught within two



Dave Mc Henry of the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission leads Asheville Regulatory members David Baker and Liz Hair up a stream to look for trout. His device momentarily stuns fish for biologists to study them before they revive and return to the water.

weeks of stocking. NCWRC focuses on stocking trout only in places where trout would not survive year-round due to high late summer water temps (>72 F), degraded habitat due to sediment, or poor water quality. For stream channels where trout are able to reproduce on their own, NCWRC manages those streams with size and creel regulations designed to protect those wild trout.

So, the next time you're in a restaurant and see trout on the menu, hopefully you'll remember that this is one of North Carolina's unique natural resources that the Corps and the North Carolina Wildlife Resource Commission work diligently to protect. ■

# Patty Hargrove Wins Inaugural IM Award

As the new enterprise model for Information Management in the Corps of Engineers launched early this month, Patty Hargrove, Wilmington



District's Chief of Information Management became the first and also the last chief of IM to receive a new award for leadership in her field. The next recipient of this award will be someone serving under the new model for delivery of IM / IT services.

Patty has devoted the 28 years of her outstanding career with our District to progressively more demanding leadership roles. The past three years have challenged her, eliciting extraordinary leadership in a time of trial and transition.

She acted as Chief of the District's Information Management Division during the extended illness of our former IM Chief, Larry Mitchell, and after his death, assumed leadership of the division just as the nationwide A-76 competition was announced for Information Management Services.

It rapidly became clear that whether a contractor or the federal government 'won' the competition, Ms. Hargrove's staff of 22 long-time civil servants

would nearly all face elimination of their jobs. During the study and competition, Patty was a strong participant in nationwide aspects of the study, while continuing to lead a steadily shrinking staff and providing top quality information management services to our 400+ person organization.

She not only served her District, but is a leader in providing services outside her own geographic territory. She sent several team members to Florida and Alabama to set up and run information support systems in the aftermath of Hurricanes Charley and Ivan in 2005, and she was able to find key resources and equipment for South Atlantic Division personnel deploying to Iraq and Afghanistan to stand up an Engineer Division for those war-torn nations.

Patty's positive attitude and caring leadership have supported a superb, smooth transition toward a major organizational change in how Information Technology services are provided. She oversaw the reassignment of all but one of her 22 staff members to other permanent positions within the organization, a process in which she has used care, encouraged training and developmental assignments, and sent forward a team of people who are most welcome in other parts of the organization because of the skills and work ethic she has so carefully fostered. This outstanding effort is the more notable, because sister organizations in the Corps only now, at the last moment,

beginning to move forward with transition plans.

Patty does not confine her efforts to her Division management responsibilities. She has on numerous occasions acted as Chief of Staff for the District, orchestrating complex events such as Congressional site visits involving project sponsors, project staff, district leadership, members of Congress and their staffs. She is often asked to serve on selection panels even for senior positions outside her area of expertise because of her judgment and excellent communications skills. She serves as the District's Asian/Pacific Islander Special Emphasis Program Manager, eliciting enthusiasm and genuine interest in Asian Cultures from the work force by bringing programs on Yoga, feng shui, and the life and culture of various Asian Nations to the work force. In addition, Ms. Hargrove along with her husband and fellow District colleague, is a tireless volunteer within her community, supporting organizations that range from youth sports, to support of schools and services for special needs children like the youngest of her three sons, Christian.

Her ability to coach, mentor, and celebrate her staff and colleagues, and to lead her organization through a major change in methods of service provision have brought great credit upon Patty, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and the federal government. ■



## ROCAME CHALLENGES STUDENTS IN MATH AND IN SCIENCE

**By Tony Carter,  
ROCAME President**

ROCAME, Region "O" Council for the Advancement of Minorities in Engineering, was established in 1979 to build a sound foundation to encourage minority youths to enter the fields of engineering, science and technology. Education's responsibility is to identify students in grades 6-12 who have an aptitude for science and math. They guide the students in choosing the necessary curriculum, monitor grades and provide guidance counseling and program administration. Industry and government responsibility is to provide awareness to the various engineering/technical careers through plant tours and role models, technical expertise for competitions and summer/co-op employment for ROCAME college students.

During the past 27 years, ROCAME students have participated in annual ROCAME jamborees where they have competed in hands-on projects based on engineering principles, extemporaneous speaking, technical paper writing and quiz bowls. This year the ROCAME board voted to expand the engineering and science competition to include a science project event competition. The students were challenged to construct a science project at home or in the classroom, bring it to the competition and display for judging.

On Saturday, April 28, 2007, the annual jamboree was conducted. The jamboree began at 0830 in the cafeteria on the campus of East Columbus High School in Lake Waccamaw, North Carolina. Over 200 students from middle and high schools of Brunswick, Columbus, New Hanover and Pender counties participated in the event.

District representative Tony Carter, ROCAME President, coordinated volunteers from the District for the regional competition. Bill Bolton and Duane Pattillo helped with the pentathlon event which consisted of five tests of physical skill followed by math and/or science questions. Other events included egg drop, mystery architecture, chemistry clue, math test and a quiz bowl. North Carolina A&T State University's School of Engineering sponsored a robotics presentation hosted by Dr. Eric Cheek and Ms. Kimberly Riddick. Students participated in robot-



USACE IM Contractor Duane Pattillo helps students in the pentathlon event during the 2007 Region "O" Council for the Advancement of Minorities in Engineering. (Photo by Tony Carter)

ics challenge competition. Motorized robots from Vex Robotics are used to move red or blue blocks from a neutral site on the game court to your goal area of the court.

The jamboree was concluded with lunch and an awards presentation. Brunswick County successfully defended its title as the 2006-2007 champion as a repeat jamboree champion for 2007-2008.

A special side note is that two students that participated in the jamboree are 2007 recipients of the Bill and Melinda Gates scholarship valued at \$200,000. Also in attendance was a recipient of the 2007 North Carolina Teaching Fellows. ROCAME is excited and thankful to have such highly excelling students within its membership. ■

# MERLE FEST DRAWS SAW MUSICIANS

By R.G. Absher

When the gates opened on Merle Fest's 20<sup>th</sup> year on April 26, fans rolled into Wilkesboro, North Carolina and to W. Kerr Scott's Campgrounds to attend a tradition which began back in 1988 as the first event held to remember Eddie Merle Watson, the late son of Doc Watson. Since its beginning in an humble flatbed trailer in a field adjacent to Wilkes Community College, the event has grown today to be one of the largest folk festivals in the United States and has defined a music which is known as Americana Music. The event today reaches crowds of over 80,000 people stretched over the four days.

Since those early days, W. Kerr

Scott's assistant Operations Manager, RG Absher has been a participant and musician along with the field of regular performers who include Americana stars such as Tony Rice, Sam Bush, Belá Fleck, and Jerry Douglas. This year's lineup included the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band and Allison Kraus

When asked about those early years of Merle Fest which was then called the Merle Watson Memorial Festival, Absher said that the festival has grown in mountainous proportions since those early years. Absher mentioned that "Americana Music is a form of music which includes Blues, Swing, Celtic, Cajun, Bluegrass, Spiritual, folk and jam band music. Here you can see Donna the Buffalo playing on the same venue as the Nashville Bluegrass Band or Belá Fleck and the Flecktones. Doc Watson has turned this event into an all inclusive celebration of American folk music. Merle Fest is an exciting event with up to 13 stages and multiple events for family fun and interest.

"This area is quickly becoming the homeplace for Americana Music and



R.G. Absher, in red shirt, has participated in Merle Fest since the beginning, know then as the Merle Watson Memorial Festival.

it's right in the backyard of W. Kerr Scott," says Absher.

Besides Absher, others from the Wilmington District have participated in Merle Fest. Sherrie Storm, Chief Ranger at John H. Kerr, is a veteran of four years. Storm entered three original songs in the 2004 Chris Austin Song Writing Competition. This contest, named for the NC native singer/songwriter, is sponsored as a fundraiser to promote Americana music. Chris was a member of Reba McIntire's band and died in a tragic plane crash. Storm also performed one of her original songs on the Songwriter's stage, shared with the legendary Guy Clark, Darrel Scott, and Laurie Lewis. ■



J.H. Kerr Chief Ranger Sherrie Storm gets ready to perform her songs at Merle Fest.

For more information please go to [www.merlefest.org](http://www.merlefest.org)



## LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

## REGULATORY MISSION SUCCESS LIES IN GREAT COMMUNICATIONS SKILLS

**By Jenny Owens**

Did you know that every year the Corps creates, restores, enhances and preserves more than 60,000 acres of wetlands? How?

Corps of Engineers Regulators build and foster relationships by listening and communicating openly, they partner and collaborate, and they negotiate! Communication skills are their most powerful tools.

Wilmington's LDP class gathered in Asheville, North Carolina to learn the basics of the Regulatory mission. We experienced the communication aspect of the program first-hand by participating in a role-playing exercise centered on a hypothetical mine to be developed near a residential area. Adopting the roles and rules of a developer, a Fish and Wildlife Service representative, a community activist or a Corps Project Manager, we quickly realized the important role that the Corps

plays in helping to resolve complex and controversial issues while striving to protect the environment.

When we visited actual field sites, like a 6200-acre site near Boone, NC, proposed for residential development, we were at first discouraged to learn that this huge expanse of the Blue Ridge Mountains would likely be developed. However, once we understood that the development of this mountain property was inevitable, we also saw that what was most important was **how** the land would be developed.

This is where the Corps' Regulatory leadership role is critical. They serve as the liaison and often the mediator between developers, the public, and resource agencies. At the Boone site, we met with the developer and the environmental consultant, who are making some fairly significant sacrifices to minimize environmental impacts.

Of course, some actions are required by law. However, many are not. For example, the developer plans to conserve and protect 2500 of the 6200 acres by avoiding areas near streams.

Why would a developer pass up the opportunity to develop 2500 acres of prime mountain property? Part of the answer is that the public, including potential buyers, appreciate conservation and preservation, but the other part lies with the negotiating skills of the Corps of Engineers' regulators.

The Asheville Regulatory Field office staff has worked closely with the developer, the consultant and the resource agencies, and play a key role in minimizing environmental impacts. Their knowledge is powerful, but their voices and communication skills are all-important to the results they get. ■

## LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

## EMPOWERMENT &amp; VISION LEAD W. KERR SCOTT TOWARD NEW ACHIEVEMENT

**By Jory Shepherd**

What does pretending to be the part of a tree have to do with leadership?

"Everything," says Terry Ramsey, W. Kerr Scott Operations Manager. "If you're a leader, you have power – share the power!"

Ramsey also believes an effective leader must have vision. In a recent session with the Leadership Development Class, he and his staff demonstrated how vision and empowerment pay off.

The vision? Build an Environmental Education Center for W. Kerr Scott Lake. Drawing on ideas from Richard Louv's book "Last Child in the Woods" Ramsey and his staff drive toward creating a place that will lead today's kids, who rarely explore nature freely on their

own, much less get out in the wild and build a tree house, to get back in the woods.

Rangers Miriam Fleming, an N.C. Certified Environmental Educator and Juanita Souther, also earning her certification, are prime carriers of the vision, and empowered leaders. Ramsey believes that innovation and a desire for success grow when staff members like these Rangers get out in front. They are viewed as leaders by the community—and their work played a part in convincing area school boards, including both Wilkes and Yadkin County Public Schools, to endorse the Environmental Education Center project.

The enthusiasm the rangers generate became clear to the LDP class as we experienced interpretive programs they

use to get kids back in the woods. We especially liked the 'Tree Factory' lesson in tree physiology. Each member of the Dirty Dozen class "became" a part of a tree until it was able to function.

We concluded that Ramsey's approach: "taking risks, while staying within regulation," would yield benefits. He bets that much of the new Center will be funded through donations. How? W. Kerr Scott boasts two cooperating organizations that have brought major support: Eastern National and Friends of W. Kerr Scott Lake. When we saw the fine performance facility at the new Amphitheater built with great help from the 'Friends', and the book store and firewood sales supported by Eastern National, we thought Ramsey's 'bet' was probably not that risky! ■

# WEBSITE HIGHLIGHTS

WITH BARBARA EKELUND

As we're all consumers and often use credit cards for purchases, the problem of identity theft



has become a growing problem.

The FTC offers this website, [www.ftc.gov/bcp/edu/microsites/idtheft/](http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/edu/microsites/idtheft/), as a national resource to learn about this crime and how we can protect ourselves from it. It also has a section on what to do if it should happen to you. There are also reference resources for consumers, businesses, law enforcement and the media.

With summer approaching, my thoughts turn to vacations and the kids, so here are a few websites that may prove useful or entertaining.

[www.MySummerCamps.com](http://www.MySummerCamps.com) is an online directory and guide to summer camps for both kids and teenagers. It's a colorful

site capable of searching over 25,000 camps by location/region, type (traditional, specialized activity) or gender. Results are a brief description with contact info and links to each camp's own website.

The National Archives has a wonderful and vast site [www.archives.gov](http://www.archives.gov) if you are interested in our nation's history, America's historical documents (the Declaration of Independence or Constitution), presidential libraries or genealogy. If you can get to Washington during June, there are special programs on the records of the Battle of Midway; two book talks, the first on *Reading the Man: a portrait of Robert E. Lee through his letters*; and, the second on *Watergate: The presidential scandal that shook America*; and lastly a discussion of the Nixon tapes.

A cool website is this!

[www.popularmechanics.com/home\\_journal/tools/](http://www.popularmechanics.com/home_journal/tools/) from the Popular Mechanics magazine has information on home improvement tools. Their article archive has lots of info on hand and power tools, including product reviews and advice on buying and using specific tools. Links to related sites in the DIY Network: Home Improvement Tools [www.diynetwork.com/diy/hi\\_tools/0,2036,DIY\\_13936,00.htm](http://www.diynetwork.com/diy/hi_tools/0,2036,DIY_13936,00.htm) and This Old House: Tools & Materials [www.thisoldhouse.com/toh/knowhow/tools](http://www.thisoldhouse.com/toh/knowhow/tools)).

A fun, family-friendly website from the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences has great brainteasers, puzzles and riddles. This Kids' Page, <http://www.niehs.nih.gov/kids/braint.htm>, helps kids understand the way scientists find solutions that may not always be "easy to see at first." ■



COMMENTARY

## SCARS AND RINGS

The tree lay  
on the ground  
before me, all  
in pieces.

Taken down  
by Hurricane  
Fran, it had



Bill Adams

been dismembered with a chainsaw  
and stacked into a neat pile. As I  
approached from downwind I could  
smell its piney blood before I even  
got close. A lump formed in my  
throat.

It had been a special tree to me. I  
could see it standing every day as I  
went to work. To me it was a liv-  
ing reminder that we all have to  
persevere against the ravages of  
life. Even though it was only about  
10 inches in diameter it bore the  
turpentine's scar from an industry  
that ended with the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It  
was stunted, it was old. The world  
had changed dramatically during its  
life but it had stood, seemingly  
timeless against the tide of change.  
Now it was gone.

I counted the tree rings on the cut  
surface. Each time I counted I got  
a different number, but I always  
came up with one that told me it  
had begun life around 1850. It had  
gone through periods of fast  
growth, but for the most part it had  
grown quite slowly, typical of a  
longleaf pine in sandy soils. But



A turpentine worker boxing a longleaf pine in the  
late 19<sup>th</sup> century (photographer unknown).

the turpentine's work had really  
hurt that tree. Not only did it carry  
an exterior scar for the rest of its  
life, the lean rings caused were  
shown in its heart.

That tree was a veteran of so  
many battles. Born before the Civil  
War, it had had its life blood  
tapped, it had been attacked by bee-  
tles, it had survived fires, it had a  
fungus called red-heart disease, it  
had seen the other trees around it  
die during other hurricanes, but it  
had stood strong in the face of it all  
– until the night when a straight-  
line wind came from Hurricane  
Fran. On that night that old veteran  
was called home. Soon it was  
piled-up, hauled away, and its  
stump ground. Today there is no  
trace it ever existed. But in my  
mind's eye I can see it still.

I recently thought of that tree  
again as I stood next to an open  
coffin containing the body of Bill  
R., a World War II veteran. I had  
been providing palliative care to  
Bill for months as a hospice volun-  
teer. We'd spent many hours talk-  
ing about our lives, our histories,  
and our faith. The whole time I

## SCARS AND RINGS CON'T

knew Bill he was hooked-up to an oxygen machine. As I stood next to Bill's coffin I knew emphysema had finally cut him down. Like that tree, Bill was gone. Like that tree, Bill had a history. Like that tree, his heart had lean rings; I know it did, because he told me.

Bill had grown up in the Brooklyn neighborhood in north Wilmington. He'd played baseball with the local teams. He'd been a part of the mechanized cavalry that rolled through Europe under the command of General Patton. He'd suffered broken relationships and divorce. He'd had hopes and dreams that he knew were never coming true. He'd weathered many storms and had been injured many times, but he remained a remarkable man of faith. As a carpenter he had personally help construct seven different churches in the Wilmington area. That was something he was very proud of, and a fact that he repeatedly shared.

But World War II, in particular,

had scarred Bill deeply. We'd frequently talk about his time in Europe, about the destruction he'd seen, about the starving people, about the concentration camps he'd help to liberate, but sooner or later he'd always stop short. Sooner or later came a memory and a pain that he couldn't share. His eyes would get misty and he would say "We all had to do things we didn't want to do." Out of respect for his pain I didn't ask - that lean ring was very dark. While I don't believe he ever received a purple heart, to his dying day Bill was a wounded soldier.

Now the tree and Bill are both committed to the earth: one scarred by a turpentine's act, the other by an act of war; one claimed by too much air, the other by too little. History will remember neither but

they are forever two veterans linked in my heart. When I think of each I smile and I hurt. I, too, am laying down rings. ■

*Personal commentary published in this newsletter, thoughts and opinions expressed herein do not reflect official policy of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.*





## KARATE CON'T

difficult for the foreign student since he would soon be out of touch and far away from his Sensei on Okinawa, unable to receive further correction for an extended period until his return to Okinawa, if ever.”

Karate, once practiced in private among closely-knit groups of people, soon became a major cultural export item from a tiny subtropical island in the Far East. Many Okinawa-trained Americans became self-professed experts in their own American dojo for throngs of eager students. As time passed their students began teaching newer generations of practitioners. Signs and advertisements began popping up across the country; “Join the Black Belt Academy”; “Earn a Black Belt in One Year”; “Original Okinawan Karate School”; and “We are a Black Belt school”. A “black belt” in the U.S. soon came to symbolize aggression, and those who wore it were perceived as having mastered a mysterious, secretive Far Eastern fighting method. In reality, earning a black belt on Okinawa meant that a karate practitioner had learned the basics and was ready to learn the deeper aspects of the art form. Some Americans simply misunderstood or disregarded the rules of

karate; one of which is to walk away from a fight, and another is to train for a fight you hope will never happen. The old Okinawan saying is “It’s not important to win – it’s more important to not lose”.

Lieutenant Colonel Drew Doolin, a U.S. Marine who studied karate at Breyette’s dojo, earned his first degree black belt or “Shodan” from the source. Currently assigned at the Pentagon, he found that when he visited some American dojo of various systems, “making rank” held more priority than personal improvement.

“In the US there’s certainly much more emphasis on achieving belt colors. We’re kind of an ‘instant rewards’ society. Some American karate instructors feel that you have to put a stripe on a kid’s belt to keep him motivated. On Okinawa we very rarely wore our belts. It wasn’t about rank.”

Doolin said camaraderie was key to the well-rounded training he received. He enjoyed training with the Okinawans and he learned to appreciate their strong sense of community and family.

“The cultural exchange was the best part of it – being out there and spending time with a karate master,

and understanding how he views life. Karate *is* his life. It isn’t just a sport. I got stronger and better at technique, but training far transcended just a particular skill level when practicing karate. I miss that part of it because when I came back to the U.S. there wasn’t that kind of camaraderie. It sometimes feels very artificial here. And it’s hard to be corrected when you’ve trained at the source.”

Marine Colonel Medio Monti has trained with Breyette during two separate tours on Okinawa. Even with five years of expert training from Breyette and Breyette’s Sensei, Toyama Seiko, Monti feels there’s vast room for improvement.

“When Toyama Sensei corrects me I often feel like I’m so terrible I don’t belong in the same room with him,” he said. “Gordi just smiles. Afterwards he reassures me that if Toyama Sensei didn’t care about me, he wouldn’t say anything. It’s true. Even 8th degree black belts must endure the relentless corrections required to master the next level. There is no finish line. This is a life long pursuit.”

Not all karate practitioners in the U.S. have misunderstood the deeper

## CORPS FAMILY NEWS

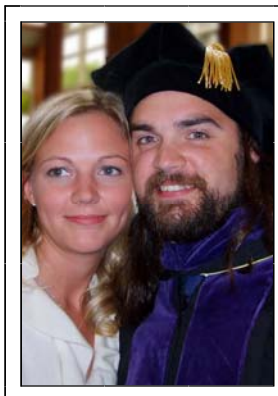
Samuel Robert Hilliard (pictured below with big sister Gabby) was born 1 May to Donna and **MAJ Robert Hilliard**. He weighed six pounds, 15 ounces at birth and measured 19 and a half inches long.



Jayden Risa Collins, newborn daughter of Roger and **Jocelyn Collins** was born 5 June at 11:25 PM. She weighed in at seven pounds, 11 ounces and was 19 inches long at birth.

Harley Keyston, a fourth grader at Pine Valley Elementary and grandson of **Patricia Prentiss**, was one of eight pupils who achieved highest honors from Continental Mathematics League as National Student Leaders in Mathematics Pythagorean Division. Harley has maintained perfect scores in all five national mathematic competitions this year.

James Harpold, son of **Penny Schmitt**, graduated from the University of Oregon Law School on May 12th. He and his wife



Lara have returned to Virginia, where he will take the bar exam later this summer.

### FUTURE SCIENTISTS, ENGINEERS, LAWYERS, AIRBORNE WARRIORS?

As part of Bring Your Child to Work Day, the Wilmington District's Special Emphasis Program hosted the sons and daughters of District members. The kids were treated to lunch and participated in various presentations.



## KARATE CON'T

meaning of karate. Those who make the pilgrimage to Okinawa bring back not just fighting and defending skills, but art and philosophy to pass on to their students. Breyette, Doolin, and Monti feel fortunate to have been stationed on Okinawa while in the military, and realize that their experience was unusual.

"You can't really blame Ameri-

cans here for not grasping the whole aspect of karate," Doolin said. "Not everyone can afford to go to 'Mecca,' and not everyone wants to join the military. So that's truly understandable."

"This is the last opportunity we have to train with the oldest generation of Masters who were in touch with the founders of their systems," Breyette added. "Americans have

the reputation of being recorders and preservers of cultures and histories. While many enjoy modernizing and supplementing their training, I feel it's also our responsibility to study, research, and preserve karate in its original form, to serve as a reference from which later generations can draw information, support, and deeper understanding of the origins of the arts." ■